

OVERVIEW OF TECHNICAL SERVICE PROVIDER CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Certification (valid for a three year period)

1. Determine if you want to be certified

- Access the NRCS national TechReg web site at: <http://techreg.usda.gov>
- Click on the “Certification Criteria” button on the right side of the page. Review the categories that you may want certification in and the criteria that you must meet to receive certification.
- Click on “View the Technical Service Provide Agreement” on the left side of the page and review what you will be asked to sign in order to become certified. .
- Continue if you meet all the required criteria and wish to apply for certification.

2. Request certification.

• ***“Getting the appropriate accounts and passwords needed to request certification”***

- Access the NRCS national TechReg web site at: <http://techreg.usda.gov>
- Click on either “Get a USDA User Id and Password”. You will be taken to the E-authentication site. Review the “What is an account” page and apply for a USDA level 2 E-government user ID and password.
- Respond within 7 days to any confirmation e-mail that may be sent to you from this site.
- Then visit a local NRCS office with a government picture i.d. to activate your level 2 information and to request a Service Center Information Management System (SCIMS) account. The local office official should activate your level 2 information; develop a SCIMS account for you and “link the SCIMS account to your level 2 information”. Local officials sometimes forget this critical linking step. So remind them if necessary. TechReg will not allow you to use your activated i.d. and password if the SCIMS/Level 2 link has not been completed. Once linked your Level 2 user id and password can be used within a few hours to begin the on-line certification process on TechReg.
- Receiving a Level 2 i.d. and password does not mean that you are certified. It rather means that you can now start the request for certification process.

• ***“Requesting certification”***

- Go back to the main TechReg site and click on the step by step instructions for certification on the right hand side of the page.
- Return to the main TechReg site and click on either “login” (upper left hand corner” of page) or “apply on-line (left side of page); login and follow instructions.
- **Common issues and problems in requesting certification:**
 - *Profile Part 1 Section A. Contact Information.* This comes from your SCIMS account. If you need to change your contact information you have to return to your local office and change your SCIMS information. The information cannot be changed on line by you.
 - *Profile Part 1 Section B. Associated Companies/Agencies.* This section is normally left blank and only used when a business wants to appear on TechReg.
 - *Profile Part 1 Section C. Accreditations/Licenses.* Certification criteria for some categories require licenses or accreditations. Your application will not be processed if required licenses or accreditations are not shown in this section or if your license has expired. Also, individuals requesting certain certifications under their Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) accreditation are currently locked into the state that issued the CCA. Requesting certification in another state causes the system to show the application for that state as “incomplete”.
 - *Profile Part 1 Section E1- Professional References.* **Always fill this section out and try to provide references from clients.** Certification criteria for some categories require references specific to the category or practice you want certification in (indicated by a checked box in Section G). In such cases your application will not be processed if Section E1 is not completed. Additionally, NRCS staff will be looking at this section carefully for all categories. .
 - *Profile Part I Section F-Familiarity with NRCS Guidelines, Criteria and Standards.* **Always complete this section.** This section is often left blank or is lacking in specifics. **All State TSP Coordinators will carefully review this section.** The Minnesota NRCS will not certify you until you have familiarized yourself with NRCS-Mn. Conservation practice technical guidance and cost-share program policies addressing producer payments for implementing or installing

conservation practices. Do this by attending NRCS sponsored group orientation sessions; one on one orientation sessions with NRCS Minnesota staff; and/or by reviewing material on the NRCS Minn. homepage.

- *Profile Part 2 Section G-Certification Categories.* Select the category(ies) you are requesting certification for. Then select the option under each category whose criteria you must meet to receive certification. Then indicate “how you meet the criteria”. “Save” your entries. This section should show a “ready” status (as in ready for signing your certification agreement) if you have completed and saved everything correctly. After signing the agreement this section should show a “submitted” status (as in submitted for review). If you miss something your application will show “pending” or “incomplete” and you won’t be allowed to sign your certification agreement.

A print screen of a correctly completed Section G is shown at the end of this overview. The selected category was Manure Wastewater Handling and Storage. The applicant had several options (left hand column) available to demonstrate competency. The applicant toggled the “experience” option. The “experience” option had six requirements (criteria) all of which must be met. The applicant toggled all appropriate “how criteria were met” boxes.

Many mistakes are made in this section. Some candidates fail to select or toggle an “option”. Others fail to check one or more “how criteria were met” boxes making the application “incomplete”. Others fail to provide references when references are mandatory.

- *Profile Part 2 Section H-Services.* Many applicants select all the conservation practices (services) available under the category they have chosen instead of reviewing the services and removing those those they have no experience in.
- *Profile Part 2 Section J-Certification Agreement.* Applicants sometimes do not complete this section even though everything else has been correctly completed. In this case the application will show a “Ready” (possibly an “incomplete” status) and will not be “Submitted” to NRCS for review. Anytime you “update” Section G you may have to resign the Part J Certification agreement. However your original certification renewal date remains the same.
- Successfully completing your application puts it into a “Submitted” status. This is a good way to check if you have done everything correctly. Go back to Part 2 Section G and check your status. If it says “Submitted” you know that state TSP Coordinators have been sent your application for review. Additionally, you will receive an E-mail telling you that you have successfully requested certification.

3. Review of requested certification.

- NRCS employees in each state you are requesting certification in will review and verify your application by:
 - Checking required licenses
 - Checking completion of required courses
 - Checking references when these are a required criteria
 - Occasionally asking for work examples on certain critical practices such as “prescribed burning plans”
 - Often asking you how you became familiar with NRCS standards and policies
 - Occasionally asking you about your experience with specific conservation practices that you are requesting certification for. E.g. the category
 - Some states will interview you.

Certification renewal

See the Frequently Asked Questions about Renewal on the NRCS-Minn. home page under TSP

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TSP Coordinator
NRCS in Minnesota
01/11/06

Update Criteria - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Select Option

Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage Option 1 - Experience.

Criteria	How Criteria Was Met				
	License / Certificate	Education	Work Exp.	References	NRCS Fam.
A current Professional Engineers license as required by law in the state of practice.	Specific License/Cert. Required State License/Cert. Required Engineering License for State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete modules 1 through 5 of NRCS Conservation Planning course. Anyone can take the first 5 modules of the Conservation Planning Course, self-paced, off of the Internet. The web site for the course is: http://www.nedc.nrcs.usda.gov/catalog/consplan.html	License from Part 1 None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete NRCS training course Animal Waste Management- a primer or an NRCS approved equivalent.	License from Part 1 None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complete NRCS training course Animal Waste Management- level 2 or an NRCS approved equivalent.	License from Part 1 None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Experience in the planning, design, layout, inspection and certification of manure and wastewater handling and storage (MWHS) practices including any applicable Standards and Specifications.	License from Part 1 Engineering License for State	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide two locations or customer references where technical service has been provided that can verify your experience and proficiency in planning, designing, installation/layout, and checkout of manure and wastewater handling and storage (MWHS) practices.	License from Part 1 Engineering License for State	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage Option 2 - Univ TN Certification.

Criteria	How Criteria Was Met				
	License / Certificate	Education	Work Exp.	References	NRCS Fam.
A current Professional Engineers license as required by law in the state of practice.	Specific License/Cert. Required State License/Cert. Required Engineering License for State	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Experience in the planning, design, layout, inspection and certification of manure and wastewater handling and storage (MWHS) practices including any applicable Standards and Specifications.	License from Part 1 None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage Certification through the University of Tennessee CNMP Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage element certification process.	Specific License/Cert. Required None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide two locations or customer references where technical service has been provided that can verify your experience and proficiency in planning, designing, installation/layout, and checkout of manure and wastewater handling and storage (MWHS) practices.	License from Part 1 None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Required <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage Option 3 - EMS Certification.

Criteria	How Criteria Was Met				
	License / Certificate	Education	Work Exp.	References	NRCS Fam.
A current Professional Engineers license as required by law in the state of practice.	Specific License/Cert. Required State License/Cert. Required Engineering License for State	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CNMP Plan Development - Total Plan Certification as a CNMP Planner through the EMS LLC certification	Specific License/Cert. Required None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Close